If You Have Problems Getting Metar Data Into Your WHFS Database

Sometimes the metar data from ASOS stations does not get decoded properly and stored in the WHFS database (IHFS_DB1.2). The metar2shef program which decodes the metar and makes a SHEF file could generate errors because of spaces and carriage returns embedded within the metar observation.

The metar2shef program decodes the metar and makes a SHEF file that is put in the data/fxa/ispan/hydro directory where the shefdecoder gets it. The metar2shef program (really a C language binary) is called by a script called ***run_metar2shef*** . This script is in the **/awips/hydroapps/whfs/standard/bin** directory. A cron activates this script 4 times an hour.

There are a few command line switches you can add to the ***run_metar2shef*** script to have the metar2shef program decode the metar observations and take care of extra characters. You may add this switch to the command line in the ***run_metar2shef*** using vi or your favorite editor. You should be logged on **ds1** and as **oper** .

The switch is **-strip**

In the ***run_metar2shef*** script there is a line where the command line is added. This line is shown below:

```
# now run the application
# -a strip 1st char off of id
# -b accept collectives
# -fcfg config filename
# -p1, -p6, -p24 account for non-reporting 0 precip
# -round round the non-special times to nearest hour
# -w generate WMO header
# -strip convert bad ascii charaters to blanks
#
$WFO_BIN_DIR/metar2shef \
 -a -b -fcfg $METAR_PARAM_DIR/metar.cfg -p1 -p6 -p24 -round -w -strip \
  >> $fnm 2>>$fnm

#
```

I have included several lines before and the # sign after so that you can find it quickly. You can see I have added **-strip** and a sentence in the comments section (**# -strip convert bad ascii character to blanks**). This will allow your metar observation to get coded into SHEF more reliably by removing bad characters such as line feeds and bad carriage returns. .

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